(b) to what extent the State Governments can restrict the functions and powers entrusted to Panchayats under the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act; and

(c) whether Government propose to extend the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act to the areas mentioned in the sixth Schedule of the Constitution?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS (SHRI CHANDRADEO PRASAD VERMA): (a) and (b) The Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 provides that the Legislature of a State may, be law, endow the Panchayats with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as institutions of self-government and such law may contain provisions for the devolution of powers and responsibilities upon Panchayats at the appropriate level. Panchayati Raj is a State subject. The State Governments have already passed necessary legislation in this regard in consonance with the Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 and are entrusting powers and functions to the Panchayats, However, this is a continuous process.

(c) At present there is no proposal to extend the provisions of Constitution (73rd Amendment) Act, 1992 to the Sixth Schedule Areas in the country.

Revision of Norms and Financial Assistance for Old Age Pension

682. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 2864 given in the Rajya Sabha on 19th December, 1996 and state:

(a) whether Government have since taken any final decision regarding proposal to revise the norms and financial assistance for old age pension under the National Social Assurance Scheme; and

(b) if so, the details of the revisions made?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS (SHRI CHANDRADEO PRASAD VERMA): (a) No, sir. The final decision has not yet been taken.

(b) Does not arise.

Financing Solar Pumps for Protected Water Supply Schemes

683. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether financial assistance under the Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission is provided for the use of solar pumps for protected water Supply schemes all over the country;

(b) if so, the details of the funding pattern;

(c) whether any solar powered Protected Water Supply Schemes have been financed in Andhra Pradesh; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS (SHRI CHANDRADEO PRASAD VERMA): (a) Yes, Sir. Financial assistance is considered on the basis of specific proposals from the States and where conventional source of energy is not available.

(b) 100% of the approved cost has been provided as Central assistance.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) 44 Solar Photo Voltaic Systems have been installed in Andhra Pradesh.

Drinking Water to the Residents of Bara Village in Pauri Garhwal District

684. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what action has been taken by the Garhwal Jal Sansthan, Pauri, District Pauri Garhwal, to meet the demand for